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1918

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# GERMAN CENTRE FRONT IS COMPLETELY BROKEN

## Prisoners Taken By French and British Now Total 21,000, With Innumerable Guns Advance South of the Somme is Nine Miles and German Left Flank, Placed in Great Jeopardy, Prepares for Retreat—Canadians Capture Rosieres.

### CANADIANS GAIN TWO MILES BEYOND DEFENCES OF AMIENS

#### French Troops Also Make Rapid Progress, and Advance More Than Four Miles, and With the British Continue Severe Fighting on the New Line.

London, Aug. 9.—Fighting was still continuing between the Anglo-French forces and the Germans southeast of Amiens, according to the British official communication received from Field Marshal Haig this evening. The general line of Plerrepoint, Arvillers, Rosieres, Rainecourt and Morcourt had been attained by the allied troops this evening. The text of the communication follows: "During the morning the allied armies renewed their attack on the whole battlefront south of the Somme, and here made progress at all points, in spite of increasing hostile resistance. "French troops, extending the front of their attack southward, captured the village of Plerrepoint, and the

#### SO IS EVERYONE ELSE.

Paris, Aug. 9.—Those who have met Marshal Foch in the last few days are unanimous in declaring that he is in great good humor, according to La Liberte. Premier Clemenceau, who dined with the marshal yesterday, said he found him radiant and looking 20 years younger than when he had last seen him.

wood north thereof. North and northeast of this locality French troops made rapid progress, and realized an advance of more than four miles in the course of the day.

"On the front of the British fourth army the Canadian and Australian troops, with admirable dash, having captured the line of outer defences of Amiens, advanced beyond them to a

depth of two miles after severe fighting at a number of points. "Before evening the French and British troops had reached the general line of Plerrepoint, Arvillers, Rosieres, Rainecourt and Morcourt. "Fighting is still continuing on this line.

"North of the Somme local fighting is reported.

"The number of prisoners has reached 17,000 and between 200 and 300 guns have been taken, including railway guns of heavy calibre.

"French mortars and machine guns have been captured in large numbers and also immense quantities of stores and materials of all descriptions, including a complete railway train and other rolling stock.

"Our casualties yesterday were extremely light."

### ALLIES SWEEP GERMANS BACK ACROSS PLAINS OF PICARDY

#### Under Pressure of British and French Troops the Entire Montdidier Sector May Have to Be Abandoned—Many More Villages and Innumerable Guns Captured.

Over a curving front of more than twenty miles the British and French troops are continuing to sweep back the Germans across the Plains of Picardy from the region north of the Somme east of Morlanouet to the eastern bank of the Avre northwest of Montdidier.

As on the first day of the offensive, material progress was made over the entire battlefront. Many additional villages were captured; the bag of prisoners was largely increased; numerous guns and great quantities of war stores were taken, and heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy by tanks, armored motor cars, the cavalrymen and the infantry. The losses sustained by the Anglo-French forces are declared to be relatively small. To the allied forces there have fallen 17,000 German prisoners and between 200 and 300 guns, many of them of heavy calibre and innumerable machine guns, trench mortars and kindred small weapons.

Ground Ceded in North. To the north of the Picardy theatre the Germans also have given ground on two important sectors—on the famous Lys salient, northwest of La Bassée, and on the equally famous West of Ypres on the equally famous battlefront north of Kemmel. On the Lys sector territory over a front of more than seven miles was evacuated by the enemy, while to the north of Kemmel the British advanced their line over a front exceeding 1,000 yards.

These manoeuvres on the part of the Germans seemingly indicate that they are considering their ground insecure in the face of the heavy forces General Haig is known to have in both

regions to ward off any attempt to reach the channel ports, or that Crown Prince Rupprecht's army has been materially decreased in strength to rush reinforcements to the battle zones where the German army's back south are being sorely harassed.

Deep Penetration. Already having penetrated the Picardy salient to a depth of nearly 13 miles in the centre towards the vicinity of the important railroad junction of Chaules and at other points along the arc pushed forward between five and seven miles, the northern and southern flanks of the battlefront, where the Germans had been resisting desperately, gave way before the pressure respectively of the British and French.

On the north the British captured Morlanouet and pressed on eastward, while on the south, northwest of Montdidier, Plerrepoint, Contoire and Arvillers were taken by the French, who drove in their wedge to a distance of more than eight and one-half miles.

Germans to Run. The tanks, armored cars, and cavalry are still working throughout the entire region, while airplanes are soaring far behind the lines, "bombing transport and troop movements and also paying particular attention to the bridges over the Somme by which the enemy is endeavoring to escape from their advancing foes. All behind the line the Germans are destroying the ammunition depots as they quit their positions.

With the new turn of events Montdidier is in an uncomfortable position, with the allies hammering away cross-fire at the Germans holding it and with the only railroad leading into the town also under their guns. A forced evacuation of the town seems not

improbable. In fact, with further pressure eastward by the allies between the Somme and the Avre and ward against the Germans from the line running northwestward from Soissons it is not outside the realm of possibility that the entire Montdidier salient will have to be abandoned.

There has been little fighting of great moment on the Vesle River, except in the nature of reciprocal artillery duels. The Americans, however, have made another crossing of the Vesle and captured the village of Fismette, northwest of Fismes.

#### P.A.Y.E. STREET CARS ARE EXPECTED SOON

Management of T.S.R. Has Abandoned Idea of Employing Women as Conductors.

The Toronto Railway Company's new pay-as-you-enter cars are rapidly nearing completion, and it is thought they will be in operation—probably on Yonge street—in a month's time. War conditions in the United States are responsible for the delay in receiving some of the necessary fittings. However, they may be along any time now. The special miniature engines which open and close the doors of the cars have also been delayed, but they, too, are expected shortly.

As far as the management of the company is concerned, the idea of employing women as conductors has been abandoned, largely as a result of the men's attitude on the matter. The final decision as to whether they will be employed or not rests with the board of directors, and that body has not yet met to discuss it.

### Chaules Junction May Fall

#### Eyes of Allies Are Fixed on Important Railway Centre.

#### FIGHTING AT CHIPILLY

#### Thousands of Germans Laid Down Their Arms on Peronne Road.

London, Aug. 9.—The present advance here already had an important effect upon the strategic situation. German forces at Montdidier are now in a very unprofitable salient, with only one line of railway to supply them, and that line under cross-fire from allied guns.

It seems likely that a withdrawal from Montdidier may be necessary if the Germans cannot force the French and British back from the ground taken by them during the past two days.

Another important result of the advance is that it has freed the main Paris-Amiens railway for use by the allies again. This line heretofore has been within easy range of the German guns, and the restriction thus placed on its use has been a considerable handicap to allied communications. A similar freeing of the Paris-Verdun line was one of the first important results of the recent advance on the Marne.

In Narrow Triangle. Most of the prisoners and guns captured by the British were taken in the narrow triangle between the Roye and Peronne roads. British tanks advanced with great rapidity up the roads. They were followed promptly by infantry, and thousands of Germans within the triangle found themselves well behind the British line when the attack reached them, so they laid down their arms.

The most of the captured guns were also gathered up in this triangle, which contained some of the best German gun positions in the whole front facing Amiens.

After Chaules Junction. Chaules Junction, which is most important from the point of view of transport, is now the objective upon which the eyes of the allies are fixed. It is already under constant artillery fire, and its fall would be embarrassing to the Germans over a wide area.

There was very heavy fighting today around Chipilly, on the north bank of the Somme, where the Germans were trying to hold up the British advance by striking a determined blow at the advancing troops. The British did not succeed in holding all the ground they had gained in this district, but meanwhile the advance continues further southward, and the situation around Chaules is becoming more dubious for the Germans.

#### ITALIANS BOMB POLA IN AERIAL OPERATIONS

Rome, Aug. 1.—The official communication issued by the war office today says:

"Yesterday morning enemy detachments twice attacked the Col del Rosso salient, but were repulsed. "We have bombed the military establishments at Pola, near Trent. Two hostile machines were brought down."

### GERMANS ABANDONING STORES IN GREAT HASTE TO RETREAT

#### Allied Cavalry and Tanks Run Over the Country, Causing Heavy Casualties, While the Enemy in His Hurry Abandons Everything, Including Maps.

With the British Army in France, Aug. 9, 4 p.m.—The British and French divisions have gained more ground in the great battle raging in the Amiens-Somme district. The latest reports appear to show the Germans are retiring in great haste.

The scenes on the battleground over which the allies already have passed give evidence of this haste in abandoned guns, stores and even regimental and artillery maps and papers.

Aerial observers report large streams of transport and men hurrying southwestward in full retreat. "Baiscourt fell to the allied forces this morning and Le Queval also was taken after hot all night fighting.

The cavalry is working far back toward the Somme and is still rounding up villages, while tanks and armored cars are running over the country, clearing a way for the troops or killing horses drawing enemy supplies.

Details of some of the work of these armored cars show that they have performed valiant services. One of them ran into a German held town yesterday afternoon while the German corps stationed there was having lunch. It turned, its gun thru the corps quarter windows, killed some of the staff and then chased others, who escaped from the house. At Rosieres another car set an enemy train on fire.

A group of cars met, far inside the enemy lines, a German supply column, and halted it. Four mounted German officers came up to see what the trouble was and were shot from the cars, which then proceeded to make quick work of the column.

At Framerville the cars engaged a train loaded with the enemy and finally set it afire. Tanks entered this town soon afterwards, helped the armored cars to clean it up and then hoisted flags on the roof of the building which had been German corps headquarters.

One car met a high German officer riding in an automobile along the road.

#### THE FRENCH STATEMENT

"Continuing our advance on the right, the forces of the British and our own troops won new successes today after having broken the resistance of the enemy. We have captured the villages of Plerrepoint, Contoire and Hangest-en-Santerre.

"Beyond the railway east of Hangest we have reached Arvillers, which is in our possession. Our progress in this direction has reached fourteen kilometres in depth.

"Besides considerable material, which has not yet been enumerated, we have made on our part 4,000 prisoners. Our losses and those of our British allies are particularly light.

"On the Vesle American troops captured Fismette, where they took a hundred prisoners."

The officer was killed and his machine captured.

All along the line this afternoon snipers and isolated machine gun bullets were extremely busy, but these were being silenced one by one as the advance proceeded.

It is reported that two regimental commanders have been captured in one sector.

Since daybreak the Germans have been making an extraordinary effort to blow up with field gun fire ammunition and other dumps which they had to leave so hastily yesterday.

Their aim was exceedingly poor.

#### Typical Scene.

The scene at Bayonvillers today is typical of the rest of the battle area. Broad fields of crops or brown grass fringe the town and spread for miles over the flat surrounding country.

Abandoned German field guns are lying here and there, telling the story of what happened. Lying off on the side of the road are enemy motor trucks, one of them with a trailer filled with artillery maps, some of the headquarters staff could not save.

The guns abandoned here, as elsewhere, are in shallow pits three feet deep. Little holes nearby, covered with curved iron slabs, show where the German gunners lived before they

were killed or ran to save themselves. Harbonnieres, nearby, was shelled to pieces. The gaunt walls show the accuracy of the British artillery fire. Debris lies all over the streets, which bear little signs upon which German names had been written. Here the allied forces found the house which the German mayor of the town had occupied. The whole top had been knocked off and several shells had hit the walls, but there were evidences that the mayor had stayed until the last moment in a room on the ground floor.

Trail of Tanks. Further southward the ground here and there had been ploughed by the shells, and the bodies of men and horses were lying where they fell. In some places machine gun nests were found, which had been put out of action either by artillery, tanks, infantry or armored cars. In one a machine gun which had been put out of business was lying over on its side, while scattered around were the bodies of the Germans who attended it. Apparently they had tried to escape, but were prevented by a tank.

In the wheat fields, of course, the bodies of the dead could not be seen, but in many open places the ground was dotted with German corpses.

The allies inflicted severe punishment as they advanced. In some sections this morning burial parties had already passed thru, but in others the dead are yet untouched. The allied casualties, according to the reports, were extremely light. For instance, one battalion in the thickest of the fighting had only six men killed and four officers and sixty men wounded during an advance of eleven miles. These men were tired when they finished the task before them, but today they pushed forward again.

Stoutest Resistance. In the north it appeared that the stoutest resistance developed, the Germans firing a great number of shells, especially across the Somme in the region of Chipilly. However, Warfusse, Abancourt, Bayonvillers and Harbonnieres are in the control of the British.

The German trenches throughout the whole length of the front were extremely narrow and poorly constructed. This certainly was not caused by lack of material, all kinds of which are being discovered and used by the advancing French and British forces.

Aside from the loss of ground and men, this large abandonment of material is certainly the most serious to the enemy.

The allied aircraft today heavily bombed the Germans and carried out a great number of other flights, observing the enemy's movements and keeping his machines within the German lines. This afternoon the absence of German planes was especially marked.

The British and French guns hammered away at the enemy all day, moving forward whenever required. But few German shells were coming in.

#### AMERICANS CAPTURE FISMETTE VILLAGE

Paris, Aug. 9.—American troops on the north bank of the Vesle River, here captured the village of Fismette, a short distance northwest of Fismes. The village they took 100 prisoners.

#### GREAT ARTILLERY DUEL. Austrians Report Firing in Great Strength in Seven Communes.

Vienna, Aug. 9, via London.—"In the seven communes the artillery duel has increased to great strength," says the official communication issued from Austrian headquarters today. In Albania the fighting has died down."

### British and French Win New Successes

#### Progress East of Hangest Has Reached Nine Miles in Depth and Three Villages Are Taken.

Paris, Aug. 9.—Continuing the advance on the right southeast of Amiens, British and French troops today won new successes after having broken the resistance of the enemy. They captured the villages of Plerrepoint, Contoire and Hangest-en-Santerre.

Beyond the railway east of Hangest they have reached Arvillers, which is in French possession. The progress in this direction has reached fourteen kilometres in depth.

Besides considerable material, which has not yet been enumerated, the French troops have taken 4,000 prisoners. The losses of the French and also those of the British are particularly light.

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